

213p/cm33
In the children's hearts no stirrings

That - to them be homely brought!

We are beginning at - angels to ponder some of
the sayings about - children: that there are the first
in the kingdom of heaven: that their angels do
ever behold the face of God: & that it were better
for a man that a millstone were hung
about his neck & he were cast into the depths
of the sea than that he should offend a child.
This gospel of the higher estate of childhood is
only beginning to dawn upon us, whether we
are to come to a full knowledge of the truth
depends. I think, on the use we make of such
light as we have gained. And here we are
walking blindfold amongst pitfalls many.
with mere glimmerings of light on our way. For
this childhoodship is, after all, no more than
a movement - in one direction of that
cult - of humanity - which is stirring us
all, & which may lead us to the apprehension
of

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the evolution of a being, who added to his own
charm of innocence shows daily unex-
pected traits of force, delicacy, refinement, & the
recognized & rejoiced in as family characteristics.
This peculiar loveliness in the children is to
be expected if we look upon them as redeemed
beings. We cannot too much appreciate &
rejoice in the sweetness & beauty of nature's children
& parents must needs take some pride in traits
of courage, courtesy, peace, which they see
belong to their children by right - of descent.
But here, it seems to me, it is necessary
to enter a protest. This tendency to admire
what there is in the children as human
beings, & what there is in them as divine
beings, may incline us to let
them alone more than is wholesome. In
all those families in which the
children practically bring themselves up, the

MS. B. 3. 1. 33

the divine Son of man. & may land us in the
sterile places where the Positivist sits, without
God in the world. Literature, history, biography,
art, science, charity herself, or in league to
magnify ^{nature...} ~~humanity~~ ^{little} matters at what
cost. And no wonder that this endeavor should
lead to the steady setting forth of human
nature at its loveliest - in the persons of the
children.

The character novel has had its full share
in fostering this tendency to aesthetic ad-
miration. We all know of our most pleasant
& helpful writers who have given us convincing
studies of closely family life, & who have
perhaps been the strongest of the influences
at-work in moulding the 'nice' people
of one or two generations. How do
people enjoy one another! how they
appreciate every delicate turn of character,
touch of refinement! One feels promoted

213p4cm23

in the company of such pleasant
appreciative people; like the man whose
eyes were opened, we look about for delightful
traits of meekness, sweetness, devotion,
in the people belonging to us. I. is good &
wholesome to admire, & no doubt the
world is the better for having had its eyes
opened to beauty of character in unexpected
places.

The mother above all others sits down
to a perpetual feast: if this is that best
is lovely in the grown up, how much
more lovely the spontaneous outgoings
of the child! All childhood is lovely, unless
as it is marred by the heedlessness
or the wickedness of its pranks,
& how lovely is the child ~~who submits~~
^{to them} ~~strength~~ & sweetness comes by inheritance
& how delightful to the mother to watch

What - get - I from my father?

Lusty life, vigorous will;

What - from my gentle mother?

Cheerful days, & poet's skill: -

Says Goethe: ^{like the rest of us,} ~~even~~ poets are born. not-made,
 & get - the most of what - they are from their
 parents. But - it did not - take a poet -
~~a modern scientist~~ to discover this.
 People ~~even~~ to have known it - turn out
 of mind. Like father. like child: - they said,
 & were satisfied, for it - was not the way
 in earlier days to thrust out the fresh
 facts of life. Not - so now: we talk about it
 & about it, call it - heredity, state it with
 count in our notions at - any rate, if not in
 our practice. Nobody writes a biography now
 without attempting to produce ^{an account} antecedents &
 early surroundings that shall account for his

It is at once a divine law, with the promise
of great reward, & an instrument put into
the hands of parents to enable them to bring their
almost-divine function of moulding character.
It is no substitute for the grace of God: it is
the grace of God, as truly as sunlight,
spring flowers, children's faces, manifest
that grace. And what is more, it is only the
Christian parent - who works this law to its
perfect - issues: others try, laboriously &
methodically, but they surely overlook a leak
somewhere which lets in the flood & sinks
the vessel. Perhaps the reason why many
Christian people don't reach a higher standard
of perfection is because they don't use persistently
for that purpose, this instrument for the moulding
of character which has been put in their hands.
But if we neglect - to use it for ourselves,
we will for our children: at any rate, mothers
will